

Award for Excellence in Teaching Geography

Dr Jean Andrey

Jean Andrey was appointed to the University of Waterloo as an Assistant Professor in July 1989, and has regularly taught a required, introductory undergraduate course in Environmental Research Methods, taken by students in Geography, Planning, and Environment and Resource Studies, required advanced undergraduate courses, elective advanced undergraduate courses, and graduate courses. She also has supervised 10 Masters' graduate students to completion, and has been a member of Master's (7 to completion) and PhD students (8 to completion) thesis committees.

Two special features of Jean's teaching performance are not revealed by the above teaching record. First, many students not enrolled in her courses seek her advice for senior honours or graduate theses, because of her reputation for accessibility, a supportive approach, and sound advice. She has a well-deserved reputation of being able to give guidance to students conducting research in a broad number of subfields in geography, due to her own interest in the entire discipline, and her high level of knowledge with respect to methodological issues. Second, she has an outstanding record in teaching the introductory required course in Environmental Research Methods. Students are not initially enthusiastic about this course, and a further challenge is that it must be taught to meet the needs of students in three different programs in the Faculty of Environmental Studies. Jean has developed a course curriculum, instructional guide and notes, and an approach which makes students very enthusiastic about and appreciative of the subject matter in that course.

Jean is widely recognized and appreciated by students and colleagues for the mix of learning methods in her courses, her energy, enthusiasm and humour, constructive comments, concern for students, accessibility outside the classroom, and conviction that her students "will get it." She also is recognized as extremely demanding, but fair, in her expectations of students.

Comments from two undergraduate students highlight the characteristics which make Jean Andrey an outstanding teacher. One alumnus wrote that "the greatest impact her teaching has had on me is that I will look a little deeper in whatever I am doing to get a more conclusive answer/solution. Also, I will try to find the positive in every situation, and to never stop learning." A final year honours undergraduate student remarked that she would be attending teacher's college the following year, and intended to take with her "some convictions that I have learned from ... my professor, Dr. Jean Andrey." In her words, these convictions included: "(1) enthusiasm encourages learning, (2) always believe in the best in your students, and let them know their strengths, (3) listen and learn from each person you meet, (4) keep your door and your life open to students, (5) never stop learning, (6) think positive and know there is always room for self-improvement, and (7) admit when you don't know an answer and use that as an opportunity to excite curiosity and challenge individual investigation." Jean exemplifies these convictions in her teaching, and furthermore has taken a significant leadership role in the Department of Geography at Waterloo to improve teaching and the overall curriculum.

Jean Andrey is exactly the type of teacher who the creators of the *Award for Excellence in Teaching Geography* had in mind when establishing that award.